

MEMBER PROPOSED.

John Living, Esq., Sydney.

PAPERS READ.

Note of a Species of Echidna (*Tachyglossus*), from Port Moresby, New Guinea—by E. P. RAMSAY, F.L.S.

Should any further proof be necessary of the close relationship of the Fauna of New Guinea, with that of Australia, it will be found in the fact that not less than two species of the peculiar and hitherto strictly Australian genus Echidna, or *Tachyglossus*, of Illiger, (1811) have been lately discovered there, one in the Northern parts of the Island, the other in the South, at Port Moresby.

Through the kindness of a friend at Genoa, I am enabled to lay before you this evening a paper on the first-mentioned of these species, *Tachyglossus Bruijnii* (*Peters e Doria*), containing a sketch of the head, from which it is evident that this species is quite distinct from any of those hitherto found in Australia; and through the liberality of the Rev. Mr. Lawes, who has lately presented a fine specimen of the Port Moresby species to the Museum, I am enabled to exhibit a rough sketch of the head and feet, and the quills, and to make some remarks on this very interesting and valuable addition to our Museum collection.

Tachyglossus Bruijnii is distinguished chiefly by the great length of the snout, which is about three times the length of the head. The Port Moresby species is distinguished chiefly by the long, thin, and cylindrical form of the quills, and the stiff flat hair like bristles, on the face; and other differences, which will be observed in the present description. The honor of the discovery of this second New Guinea species is due to the Rev. Mr. Lawes, who some few months ago obtained a young specimen with a remarkably short bill, which I believe has been sent to England. The 2nd specimen, obtained by the same gentleman, a fine and apparently full-grown male animal, has been presented to the Museum, and from this I have taken the following description.

ECHIDNA (*Tachyglossus**) NOV. SP.†

Male.—The head, throat, fore and hind legs, tail, and all the under surface, is covered scantily with stiff flattish bristles of a brown tint, longest on the sides of the abdomen, sides of the body and crown of the head, where they gradually merge into short spines of a whitish horn color, covering the sides of the neck and ears; a curled patch of blackish hair round the ears, overlapped by the spines in front; all the upper parts of the body except the head, is covered with long cylindrical spines, some altogether white, some all black, others parti-colored, with white or black tips, and a few black hairs scattered through the spines and on the sides of the body. The white spines appear to predominate on the nape of the neck and rump, and are longest on the sides of the body and near the dorsal line. The fore limbs are short, stout, and strong, flattened anteriorly, the hind limbs somewhat slender, the second toe nail very long, strong, curved, and hollowed below; the spur on the heel small, sharp, and of a light horn color. The snout is bare to within 0·3 of an inch from the eye, and of a purple brown color; length of bare portion, 2 inches; the skin of the under surface where visible is of a dull reddish brown.

Total length from the tip of snout to tip of tail, 13·4 inches; total length from the tip of snout to hind claw, 15 inches; fore limb, hand, and wrist to tip of longest nail, 2 inches; hind foot and claws from heel, 1·3 inches; hind leg, 3·5 inches; from the heel-spur to end of second toe, without nail, 1·5 inches; from the tip of snout to ear opening, 4·5 inches (*skin stretched*); from tip of snout to angle of mouth, 0·5 inch; from the tip of lower jaw to angle of mouth, 0·45 inch; width of opening, 0·3 inch; width of snout, 0·5 inch; distance between the eyes, 1·4 inches; across the snout at lateral groove, 0·65 inch; across the base of skull,

*“ Il nome generico di *Tachyglossus*, Illiger 1811, deve, essere usato invece di *Echidna* Cuvier 1797, perchè Forster fino dal 1778 lo aveva adoperato per denominare un gruppo di Murenidi.” *W. Peters e G. Doria, Descrizione di una nuova sp. di Tachyglossus proveniente dalla Nuova Guinea settentrionale.*

† I have not yet learned the name which has been given to this new species, but daily expect to hear of it from my friends in England. Should it, however, still be unnamed, I propose for it the name of *T. Lawesii*, in honor of its discoverer.

about 1·75 inches; length of longest spines in tail, 1·6 inches; length of longest spines from side, 1·5 inches; greatest diameter of spine, 0·1 inch; from tip of snout to the eye, 2·5 inches; from tip of snout to base of skull, about 4 inches; from vent to the tip of the tail, 1·6 inches.

The *Ophidians* of the Chevert Expedition—by WILLIAM MACLEAY,
F.L.S.

Most of the Snakes collected during the voyage of the Chevert were procured at the Katow River, on the South Coast of New Guinea.

The character of the country at that place, and for many miles East and West of it, and probably for a long distance inland, is exactly of the kind best suited for the abode of Reptiles. It may be described as a huge Delta, everywhere intersected by water channels, nowhere elevated more than a few feet above the surface of the swamp, with a dense and magnificent vegetation, a moist climate, and perpetual heat.

My visit to the place was a very hasty one. The Chevert anchored off Katow on the 2nd of July, 1875, and left again on the 11th of the same month; only a very few days, therefore, were available for collecting purposes, and of these but little use could be made, as the impenetrable and swampy nature of the country effectually baffled all attempts to get any distance from the sea shore. It is almost entirely to the natives that I am indebted for the Reptiles of that part. Maino, the head man of the village; his son Cooki, a fine lively boy of about twelve; and Howtah, the chief of a neighbouring village, with a number of others, showed a most friendly desire to get for me whatever I wanted. Not a day passed that I did not receive from them joints of bamboo tightly plugged up which were invariably found to be full of Snakes.

All the species from Katow turn out to be new. That, perhaps, is not to be wondered at, as I was the first who had ever attempted to collect on that part of the New Guinea coast; but